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### **U.S. NAVY HOSTS KIWI MEDICS**

U.S. Ambassador Bill McCormick has warmly welcomed the participation of six New Zealand medical personnel in a U.S.-led humanitarian mission to the Pacific.

“During *Pacific Partnership 2007*, the Royal New Zealand Navy, the U.S. Navy and our partners will work together to build hospitals and schools, teach preventive medicine, and provide medical and dental assistance in support of participating Pacific nations,” said the Ambassador.

Throughout the four month long *Pacific Partnership* mission, the U.S.S. Peleliu will serve as an enabling platform through which military and NGOs can coordinate and carry out humanitarian efforts. The six New Zealand personnel will be hosted aboard the amphibious ship.

“The United States is a Pacific nation, and as such, we share many interests, values and beliefs with our Pacific neighbors. The U.S. Navy plans to carry the ‘aloha’ spirit of caring, commitment and compassion with them on this deployment to assist our Pacific neighbors,” the Ambassador added. “Kiwis are renowned for their innovation and their number-eight-fencing-wire attitude. In every sense, we are delighted to have the New Zealand Navy aboard!”

*Pacific Partnership* is being supported by regional governments and NGOs. Participants include: Australia, Canada, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, the Aloha Medical Mission, Project Hope, The University of California San Diego Pre-Dental Society, and other NGOs present in the locations to be visited.

The Ambassador noted that the U.S. Navy’s relationships with many of the participating NGOs were strengthened in recent years during tsunami, mudslide and earthquake relief missions and during the *USNS Mercy* deployment in 2006.

“Last summer’s *USNS Mercy* deployment demonstrated the profound effect the mission had on the region and previewing what the men and women of the *Pacific Partnership* will experience. Mara Haun, a 60-year-old Muslim mother of three in the Philippines, had been blinded by cataracts until her eyesight was returned by an American surgical team and local medical personnel on board *Mercy*,” said the Ambassador.

An extensive number of photos of the U.S.S. Peleliu and the *Pacific Partnership* are available at: [http://www.cpf.navy.mil/news\\_images/Peleliu/photos.html](http://www.cpf.navy.mil/news_images/Peleliu/photos.html)



[http://www.cpf.navy.mil/news\\_images/Peleliu/Photo/june/070601-N-9565W-095.jpg](http://www.cpf.navy.mil/news_images/Peleliu/Photo/june/070601-N-9565W-095.jpg)

PEARL HARBOR The Pacific Fleet Ceremonial Band bids farewell to USS Peleliu (LHA 5), as the multi-mission amphibious ship sails away from Naval Station Pearl Harbor. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Senior Chief Melissa Weatherspoon.



[http://www.cpf.navy.mil/news\\_images/Peleliu/Photo/june/070601-N-9565W-084.jpg](http://www.cpf.navy.mil/news_images/Peleliu/Photo/june/070601-N-9565W-084.jpg)

PEARL HARBOR A linehandler from USS Hopper (DDG 70) looks on after casting off lines for USS Peleliu (LHA 5), after the multi-mission amphibious ship departed Naval Station Pearl Harbor. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Senior Chief Melissa Weatherspoon.



[http://www.cpf.navy.mil/news\\_images/Peleliu/Photo/june/070601-N-5476H-037.JPG](http://www.cpf.navy.mil/news_images/Peleliu/Photo/june/070601-N-5476H-037.JPG)

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii. USS Peleliu (LHA 5), a multi-mission amphibious ship, passes Wright Brother's Point Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, launching Pacific Partnership 2007. U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Michael High